

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5177

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18238

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, XF

SUBJECT: USA INSTITUTE OFFICIAL ON THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: MOSCOW 18213 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: DURING AN INTRODUCTORY CALL BY THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR ON G.A. TROFIMENKO, CHIEF OF THE FOREIGN POLICY DEPARTMENT OF THE USA INSTITUTE, TROFIMENKO WARNED THAT THE SITUATION IN THE ME IS NOW "VERY DANGEROUS." HE MOVED A STEP AHEAD OF THE OFFICIAL LINE BY ADMITTING THAT "MINOR CORRECTIONS" TO THE PRE-1967 BORDERS COULD BE CONSIDERED IN NEGOTIATIONS ON A ME SETTLEMENT. HE EXPLAINED THAT "STATEHOOD" FOR THE PALESTINIANS MEANS "SOME FORM" OF NATIONAL AUTONOMY, PERHAPS AS PART OF ANOTHER STATE. END SUMMARY.

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2. TROFIMENKO EMPHASIZED THAT THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS NOW VERY DANGEROUS. HE NOTED THAT A WARNING "AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL" HAD BEEN PASSED TO THE U.S. BEFORE THE OCTOBER WAR, AND "THE WARNING IS AGAIN BEING PASSED."

3. HE COMMENTED THAT THE U.S. "MANEUVERING" IN THE ME, IF IT ATTEMPTS TO EXCLUDE SOVIET INFLUENCE, MIGHT LEAD TO THE U.S. "OUTMANEUVERING ITSELF"---THE U.S. COULD GAIN SHORT-TERM ADVANTAGES, BUT WOULD SOON LOSE THEM AGAIN--"AS HAS BEEN THE CASE WITH SADAT." THE U.S. HAS BEEN UNABLE TO FULFILL ITS PROMISES TO EGYPT, HE SAID, AND EGYPT IS THEREFORE STARTING TO TURN TO THE SOVIET UNION AGAIN.

4. IN ANY CASE, CONTINUED TROFIMENKO, SUCH MANEUVERING DOES NOT LEAD TO ELIMINATION OF THE TRUE CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT. WHEN ASKED WHAT IN HIS ESTIMATION COULD BE THE BASIS FOR A LASTING SETTLEMENT, TROFIMENKO ANSWERED THE PRE-1967 BORDERS "PERHAPS WITH MINOR CORRECTIONS." HE EXPLAINED THAT THE TERM "STATEHOOD" (GOSUDARSTVENNOST) FOR THE PALESTINIANS, AS USED BY THE SOVIETS, REALLY MEANT NOTHING SPECIFIC, BUT WAS SIMPLY RECOGNITION OF THE NEED OF THE PALESTINIANS FOR "NATIONAL AUTONOMY," PERHAPS AS PART OF ANOTHER STATE. HOW EXACTLY THIS NATIONAL AUTONOMY IS TO BE REALIZED WOULD HAVE TO BE THE SUBJECT OF NEGOTIATIONS.

5. TROFIMENKO STRESSED THAT THE SOVIET UNION, CONTRARY TO THE CHARGES MADE AGAINST IT, DOES NOT SUPPORT THE EXTREMIST ELEMENTS IN THE PLO. IT SUPPORTS ONLY THOSE WHO ARE STRIVING TOWARD A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT.

6. COMMENT: TROFIMENKO, WHO WENT TO VLADIVOSTOK FOR THE SUMMIT, CAN BE EXPECTED TO ACCURATELY REFLECT THE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT LINE, EVEN THOUGH HE IS NOT A POLICY-MAKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL IN ANY FORMAL SENSE. HIS REMARKS ON SADAT AND THE IMPLICATION OF A TURN TO THE BETTER IN SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE UPCOMING BREZHNEV VISIT ARE BORN OUT BY AN IN-CONFIDENTIAL

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CREASINGLY WARM--THOUGH STILL FAR FROM EXUBERANT-TREATMENT OF EGYPT IN THE SOVIET CENTRAL PRESS. HIS WILLINGNESS TO ADMIT TO "MINOR CORRECTIONS" TO THE PRE-1967 BORDERS IS A STEP AHEAD OF THE OFFICIAL LINE, WHICH WE HAVE HEARD FROM MORE AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES, WHO STRONGLY ASSERT THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO ADJUSTMENTS WHATSOEVER OF PRE-1967 BORDERS. TROFIMENKO'S DEFINITION OF "STATEHOOD" IS IN LINE WITH OUR ESTIMATE

THAT THE TERM IS BEING KEPT PURPOSELY VAGUE, AND WILL IN
ALL PROBABILITY REMAIN THAT WAY, TO ALLOW THE SOVIETS AS MUCH
ROOM FOR MANEUVER AS POSSIBLE DURING ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS.
STOESSEL

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